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EXAMINER

DARROW, JUSTIN T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2132

DATE MAILED: 01/12/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/414,712

Applicant(s)

SIMERLY ET AL.

Examiner

Justin T. Darrow

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 July 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5,9-21 and 23-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5,9-21 and 23-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 08 October 1999 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-57 have been presented for examination. New claims 45-57 have been added in a preliminary amendment received 05/08/2001. Claims 1, 45, and 52 have been amended and claims 6-8 and 48 have been canceled in an amendment filed 02/09/2004. Claim 1 has been amended and claims 22, 45-47, and 49-57 have been canceled in an amendment filed 07/30/2004. Claims 1-5, 9-21, and 23-44 have been examined.

Docketing

2. This application has been docketed to Primary Examiner Justin T. Darrow in Group Art Unit 2132 in Technology Center 2100.

Response to Amendment

3. The amendment to the claims filed on 07/30/2004 does not comply with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.121(c)(1) because claims 6, 7, 8, and 48, canceled in the previous amendment, filed 02/04/2004, are not listed as canceled. Amendments to the claims filed on or after July 30, 2003 must comply with 37 CFR 1.121(c)(1) which states:

(c) *Claims*. Amendments to a claim must be made by rewriting the entire claim with all changes (e.g., additions and deletions) as indicated in this subsection, except when the claim is being canceled. Each amendment document that includes a change to an existing claim, cancellation of an existing claim or addition of a new claim, must include a complete listing of all claims ever presented, including the text of all pending and withdrawn claims, in the application. The claim listing, including the text of the claims, in the amendment document will serve to replace all prior versions of the claims, in the application. In the claim listing, the status of every claim must be indicated after its claim number by using one of the following identifiers in a parenthetical expression: (Original), (Currently amended), (Canceled), (Withdrawn), (Previously presented), (New), and (Not entered).

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(1) *Claim listing.* All of the claims presented in a claim listing shall be presented in ascending numerical order. Consecutive claims having the same status of “canceled” or “not entered” may be aggregated into one statement (e.g., Claims 1–5 (canceled)). The claim listing shall commence on a separate sheet of the amendment document and the sheet(s) that contain the text of any part of the claims shall not contain any other part of the amendment.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-5, 9-11, 13-21, and 24, 26, 29-35, and 39-44 have been considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

Claim Objections

5. Claim 11 is objected to because of the following informalities: delete “hglass” in line 1 and replace with --glass--. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

7. Claims 1-5, 9-21, and 23-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "the at least one client server" in line 12. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. This rejection can be overcome by deleting “at least one client” in line 12 and replacing with --customer--.

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8. Claims 1-5, 9-21, and 23-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "the event packets" in line 17. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. This rejection can be overcome by deleting the second "the" in line 17.

9. Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 18 recites the limitation "the speed of the detected object" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. This rejection can be overcome by deleting "13" in line 1 and replacing with --17--.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

10. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an

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international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

11. Claims 1-3, 5, 9, 10, 13, 20, 24, 26, 29-35, and 39-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Acosta et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,166,729 A.

As per claim 1, Acosta et al. illustrate a digital security system comprising:

at least one camera unit for capturing and transmitting frames of video signals over a communication network (see column 4, lines 26-27; figure 1, item 12; camera devices; see column 4, lines 52-53; figure 2, item 24; including a CCD CCTV camera elements; see column 7, lines 26-31; acquiring images at the sites at which located and converting the images to digital information, compressing, and transmitting over a wireless network),

wherein the camera unit is programmable to perform at least one of the following: to transmit a snap shot, streaming video, or an event clip upon detecting a predefined event (see column 8, lines 42-51; figure 1, items 12 and 14; figure 2, item 24; figure 6, process 100; a digital image is captured by the CCD imaging element of the camera in "trigger-driven" or "event-driven" operating modes where an actuating event causes an image to be transmitted by the camera element over the wireless network; see column 9, lines 3-7; figure 6, step 104; where the image event is registered resulting in the transmission of the image payload), and

to simultaneously transmit a snap shot, streaming video, and an event clip or combinations thereof upon detecting a predefined event (see column 8, lines 42-51; figure 1,

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items 12 and 14; figure 2, item 24; figure 6, process 100; a digital image is captured by the CCD imaging element of the camera in “trigger-driven” or “event-driven” operating modes where an actuating event causes an image to be transmitted by the camera element over the wireless network; see column 9, lines 3-7; figure 6, step 104; where the image event is registered resulting in the transmission of the image payload);

at least one customer server coupled to the camera unit via the communications network (see column 4, lines 29-33; figure 1, items 12, 14, and 16; camera devices operatively connected with a wireless network connected to a central office video management system (COVMS) as a customer server;

at least one customer work station coupled to the customer server via the communication network (see column 4, lines 33-41; see figure 1, items 16, 18, 20, and 22; the central office video management system (COVMS) is connected to a World Wide Web server connected to the Internet accessible by a computer);

an administrator server coupled to the customer server via the communications network; (see column 4, lines 33-35; see figure 1, items 16 and 18; the central office video management system (COVMS) is connected to a World Wide Web server as an administrator server); and

authentication means at the administrator server for authenticating a customer at the at least one customer work station so as to allow the work station to receive the video signals transmitted by the at least one camera unit (see column 26; lines 39-47; figure 31, item 1058; an active user table used to validate requests for images after login and to verify that the user compute is logged in and has access privileges to the requested images);

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wherein the administrator server receives event packets and associated video information (see column 23, lines 7-12; figure 27, items 1002 and 1004; the Web Server Communications Manager retrieves images), and

intelligently routes the packets and information to one or more administrator work stations (see column 23, lines 9-12; figure 27, items 1002 and 1006; Web Server Communications Manager sends the images to all required destinations including other web sites).

As per claim 2, Acosta et al. further show:

that the camera unit transmits video signals over the communication network only after detecting a predefined event (see column 9, lines 32-46; figure 6, step 110; in “event-driven” mode in the “after” sub-mode, the transmit process transits the stream over the wireless network after the event).

As per claim 3, Acosta et al. alternatively depict:

that the camera unit transmits video signals over the communications network in response to receiving a command from a user at the customer work station or an administrator work station (see column 9, lines 32-46; figure 6, step 110; in “demand-driven” mode in the “after” sub-mode, the transmit process transits the stream over the wireless network after a request for the image).

As per claim 5, Acosta et al. also describe:

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that the camera unit transmits video signals over the communication network only after detecting a predefined event (see column 9, lines 32-46; figure 6, step 110; in “event-driven” mode in the “around” sub-mode, the transmit process transmits the stream over the wireless network after the event).

As per claim 9, Acosta et al. then point out:

that the camera unit is operable in a plurality of modes (see column 8, lines 43-48; the camera has four operating modes (“broadcast”, “demand-driven”, “trigger-driven”, and “event-driven”) and three sub-modes (“around”, “before”, and “after”)).

As per claim 10, Acosta et al. moreover specify:

that the camera unit may be remotely configured to operate in one of the plurality of modes via the at least one customer work station (see column 31, lines 6-17; figure 1, item 22; the flow of image data is carried out by the active camera table controlled by the client computers; see column 26, lines 34-38; figure 31, item 1056; where the active camera table provides information to instruct the camera to provide incoming image data).

As per claim 13, Acosta et al. further suggest:

that the camera unit includes a motion detector that analyzes the video signals captured by the camera unit (see column 8, lines 64-67; column 9, lines 1-3; figure 6, step 104; digital image processing including a motion detection operation).

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As per claim 20, Acosta et al. additionally point out:

that the authentication means includes a means to compare inputted user identification information against a database of monitored sites to which the user may access (see column 29, lines 10-24; figure 1, items 18 and 22; the client computer logs in using a username and password that was assigned during registration and the HTTP server authenticates the client computer by insuring that the supplied username and password match those in the registration database).

As per claim 24, Acosta et al. then suggest:

that the administrative server includes
means for receiving event packet information from a camera unit (see column 23, lines 7-12; retrieving images with event information) and
means for automatically contacting a customer (see column 23, lines 7-12; sending images with event information to the required destinations, including business customers).

As per claim 26, Acosta et al. next embody:

a camera system (see column 8, lines 36-38; figure 1, item 12; a camera element operating according to a particular image acquisition cycle);
an encoder coupled to the camera system that encodes the video signals transmitted by the camera unit (see column 9, lines 8-18; figure 1, items 12 and 14; figure 6, step 106; an encoder to compress the image for transmission over the wireless network);

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an encoder buffer coupled to the encoder (see column 10, lines 9-10; figure 8, steps 140 and 142; a FIFO buffer coupled to the encoder used for compression); and

and encoder buffer controller coupled to the camera system and the encoder buffer, receiving as inputs an in buffer bit rate input from the encoder, and an out buffer bit rate from the encoder buffer (see column 9, lines 62-67; column 10, lines 1-6; where the COVMS controls the encoder buffer receiving input bit rate for the image captured during the broadcast mode sequence and an out buffer bit rate for the trigger transmission at the end of each update interval).

As per claim 29, Acosta et al. also explain:

that the camera unit is coupled to a conventional sensor (see column 11, lines 29-35; where the camera transmits images triggered by a triggering device such as a road sensor).

As per claim 30, Acosta et al. then mention:

that the camera unit is configured to receive an alarm signal from the conventional sensor (see column 11, lines 35-38; detecting a trigger event), and

to transmit an event packet over the network in response to receiving the alarm signal from the conventional sensor (see column 11, lines 35-38; transmitting the image payload with event information after the trigger event is detected).

As per claim 31, Acosta et al. next discuss:

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that the camera unit starts transmitting video signals in response to receiving the alarm signal from the conventional sensor (see column 11, lines 35-38; transmitting the image payload with event information after the trigger event is detected as dictated by the sub-mode; see column 12, lines 8-14; particularly the “around” submode).

As per claim 32, Acosta et al. moreover elaborate:

that the camera unit changes a characteristic of transmitted video signals in response to receiving the alarm signal from the conventional sensor (see column 11, lines 65-67; column 12, lines 1-7; determining the number of format frames for the image payload for the trigger-driven mode).

As per claim 33, Acosta et al. further describe:

that the camera unit performs Boolean analysis of an alarm signal sent by the conventional sensor and an event detected by the camera unit before transmitting an event packet over the network (see column 11, lines 35-38; transmitting the image payload only after the trigger event is detected and the all required images are captured; see column 12, lines 42-56; in the “after” submode where the images are transmitted after the event is detected).

As per claims 34 and 35, Acosta et al. then disclose:

that the camera unit simultaneously transmits video signals in more than one compression algorithm standard format in response to detecting certain predefined events (see column 9, lines

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11-18; different compression algorithms, such as JPEG, MPEG, and others, for transmission used for different applications and image conditions).

As per claim 39, Acosta et al. also describe:

at least one administrator workstation coupled to the administrator server (see column 21, lines 57-61; a Web Server Communications Manager to monitor the timely delivery of images to web sites and users; see column 6, lines 43-46; through administrative workstations).

As per claim 40, Acosta et al. further point out:

that there is a graphical user interface provided at one of the administrator (see column 6, lines 46-49; administrative workstation with a high end graphics display) or customer workstations (see column 7, lines 17-21; a client computer with a dedicated image display device), and

that the graphical user interface schematically displays event durations for a plurality of camera units (see column 6, lines 54-58; high resolution display to evaluate image quality of the entire system; see column 8, lines 31-34; client computers accessing image information for a plurality of cameras).

As per claim 41, Acosta et al. additionally discuss:

that the video information schematically represented by the event duration display is accessible by a user clicking on the event duration display (see column 27, lines 38-64; the user computer submits HTTP requests for images for a particular event).

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As per claim 42, Acosta et al. then specify:

that the customer and administrator work stations include a multi-algorithm reader that

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

12. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

13. Claims 4 and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acosta et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,166,729 A as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Courtney, U.S. Patent No. 5,969,755 A.

Acosta et al. disclose the system of claim 1. However, they do not explicitly teach tagging frames of video. Courtney discusses that the camera unit tags frames of video signals upon detecting one of a plurality of predefined events (see column 5, lines 14-21; "removal" event tags on headers of video frames where objects are removed). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the computer art at the time the invention was made to combine the system of Acosta et al. with the tags of Courtney to allow a user to select a clip of interest (see column 5, lines 22-24).

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14. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acosta et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,166,729 A as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Broady et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,495,288 A.

Acosta et al. disclose the system of claim 1. However, they do not explicitly teach a glass break detector. Broady et al. describe that the camera unit includes a glass break detector (see column 3, lines 12-18). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the computer art at the time the invention was made to combine the system of Acosta et al. with the glass break detector of Broady et al. to sense a condition to activate the surveillance system (see column 3, lines 18-22).

15. Claims 14-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acosta et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,166,729 A as applied to claim 13 above, and further in view of Hansen et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,081,606 A.

As per claim 14, Acosta et al. disclose the system of claim 13. Although they describe capturing images before and after an event that actuates the transmission of images (see column 12, lines 8-14; figure 12), they do not explicitly teach updating a stored background image against which the digital signal processor performs motion analysis. Hansen et al. elaborate on a motion detector with an automatic learn component that automatically updates a stored background image against which the digital signal processor performs motion analysis detection (see column 3, lines 38-54; subtraction process performed on stored images before and after

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movement where the stationary objects are removed from the data). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the computer art at the time the invention was made to combine the system of Acosta et al. with the automatic learn component of Hansen et al. to use an existing video system to determine if motion has occurred (see column 1, lines 17-29).

As per claim 15, Hansen et al. further point out:

that the camera unit increases pixel coding depth (see column 3, lines 56-67; resolution level for representing moving objects in a scene of particular importance, such as mice or people), and frame rate in response to detecting motion in the video signals (see column 4, lines 48-53; processing every frame rather than every other, every third, or every fourth frame for fast moving motion). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the computer art at the time the invention was made to combine the system of Acosta et al. with the increase of pixel coding depth and/or frame rate of Hansen to represent the magnitude of the motion of a scene with high fidelity and noise suppression (see column 2, lines 19-29).

As per claim 16, Hansen et al. then specify:

that the camera unit includes an object detector (see column 3, lines 53-54; moving objects appear in the difference images). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the computer art at the time the invention was made to combine the system of Acosta et al. with the object detector of Hansen et al. to use an existing video system to determine if motion has occurred in a particular object (see column 1, lines 17-29).

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As per claim 17, Hansen et al. also discuss:

that the camera unit includes an object speed detector (see column 6, lines 32-35; determining a magnitude of flow of object(s) in a local area). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the computer art at the time the invention was made to combine the system of Acosta et al. with the object speed detector of Hansen to represent the magnitude of the motion of a scene with objects with high fidelity and noise suppression (see column 2, lines 19-29).

As per claim 18, Hansen et al. then describe:

determining whether to transmit an event packet over the network based on the speed of the detected object (see column 7, lines 36-41; an alarm signal based on the speed of the moving area). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the computer art at the time the invention was made to combine the system of Acosta et al. with the event packet transmission based on the speed of a detected object of Hansen to alert security personnel of unauthorized movement (see column 2, lines 33-41).

As per claim 19, Hansen et al. moreover embody:

that the camera unit includes an object movement detector that detects the direction of movement of a detected object (see column 6, lines 63-67; determining the orientation of the motion within the image). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the computer art at the time the invention was made to combine the system of Acosta et al. with the detection of direction of movement of a detected object of Hansen to represent the direction of

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the motion of a scene with objects with high fidelity and noise suppression (see column 2, lines 19-29).

As per claim 20, Hansen et al. then point out:

that the camera unit determines whether to transmit an event packet over the network based on what direction the detected object is moving (see column 7, lines 36-41; setting an alarm flag if there is movement in an incorrect direction). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the computer art at the time the invention was made to combine the system of Acosta et al. with the event packet transmission based on the direction of movement of a detected object of Hansen to alert security personnel of unauthorized movement (see column 2, lines 33-41).

16. Claim 44 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acosta et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,166,729 A as applied to claim 5 above, and further in view of Courtney, U.S. Patent No. 5,969,755 A.

Acosta et al. disclose the system of claim 5. However, they do not explicitly teach inserting information into the header of the transmitted frames. Courtney discusses that the camera unit tags frames of video signals upon detecting one of a plurality of predefined events (see column 5, lines 14-21; "removal" event tags on headers of video frames where objects are removed). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the computer art at

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the time the invention was made to combine the system of Acosta et al. with the tags in the header of Courtney to allow a user to select a clip of interest (see column 5, lines 22-24).

Allowable Subject Matter

17. Claims 12, 23, 25, 27, 28, and 36-38 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

18. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Toyoshima, U.S. Patent No. 5,229,850 A, disclose a video surveillance system for criminal activity.

Telephone Inquiry Contacts

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Justin T. Darrow whose telephone number is (571) 272-3801, and whose electronic mail address is justin.darrow@uspto.gov. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gilberto Barrón, Jr., can be reached at (571) 272-3799.

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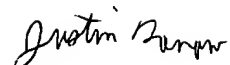
The fax number for Formal or Official faxes to Technology Center 2100 is (703) 872-9306. In order for a formal paper transmitted by fax to be entered into the application file, the paper and/or fax cover sheet must be signed by a representative for the applicant. Faxed formal papers for application file entry, such as amendments adding claims, extensions of time, and statutory disclaimers for which fees must be charged before entry, must be transmitted with an authorization to charge a deposit account to cover such fees. It is also recommended that the cover sheet for the fax of a formal paper have printed **"OFFICIAL FAX"**. Formal papers transmitted by fax usually require three business days for entry into the application file and consideration by the examiner. Formal or Official faxes including amendments after final rejection (37 CFR 1.116) should be submitted to (703) 872-9306 for expedited entry into the application file. It is further recommended that the cover sheet for the fax containing an amendment after final rejection have printed not only **"OFFICIAL FAX"** but also **"AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL"**.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-2100.

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January 10, 2004



**JUSTIN T. DARROW
PRIMARY EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100**